

Sermon #19

Worship

God is great, and a wonderful Father.

He is humble and kind, forgiving and gracious.

God has no need for human worship, nor does He demand it.

Worship is a lifestyle.

It springs from within, from each heart that knows and loves God.

It's not something you go someplace to do;

it is where you are and what you do every day.

Whatever a person worships in his heart is reflected in his lifestyle.

What or who do you seek, pursue, strive for?

What or who do you desire most?

On what or whom do you base your final decisions?

Let's look at the handout you received today. {handout}

There are at least three kinds of worship:

true worship, which is worshiping God in spirit and truth;

idol worship, which is worshiping a person or thing;

and vain worship, which is pretending to worship God.

Most of us are probably a combination of two or three of these.

My goal is to be less and less of an idol worshiper and vain worshiper, and more and more of a true worshiper.

True worship is exalting God to the highest place in your heart and mind. Neither idol worship or vain worship does this.

True worshipers live a lifestyle of trusting God, believing that

God's way is true and right; they seek to obey the teachings of Christ and seek God's mercy when they fail.

Their hearts are continually filled with joy and thankfulness for God and His great goodness.

They make decisions based on truth and the counsel of the Holy Spirit.

Jesus said, “Woman, believe Me, the hour is coming when you will neither on this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, worship the Father.

²²You worship what you do not know; we know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews. ²³But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. ²⁴God *is* Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.” John 4:21-24

Note that Jesus did **not** say,

“The true worshipers worship in a church or synagogue or temple.”

Some true worshipers join a church and attend worship services;
some true worshipers do not.

Some vain worshipers join a church and attend worship services;
some vain worshipers do not.

Some idol worshipers join a church and attend worship services;
some idol worshipers do not.

Church membership and attendance, in itself, does not determine
whether or not a person is a true worshiper.

You have a choice whether to be a true worshiper, vain worshiper or
idol worshiper. That choice is made in your heart and mind, every
minute of every day.

What do you choose at this moment?

“O My people, I want you to see My goodness,
and how much I love you.

When you do, joy and praise and thanksgiving
will overflow your heart.

Put Me first because I AM first.

I am not a wannabe; I AM.

See and believe the truth; it is life to your soul.

I AM above.

Look to Me and I will lift you up.
Do not worship man or any created thing,
for that will bring you down.

It is for your sake that I tell you to look to Me and put your faith in Me.
I AM first, best, greatest, most powerful, most loving,
most caring, most real, most true, most giving.

I AM all in all.

No one knows you like I do or loves you like I do.
Put your trust and faith in Me, and love your fellow man.

I AM good, and I always do what is best.

Rejoice! I have all you need!

Humble yourself and let Me be your loving and gracious Father.

Submit to My care and leadership, and you will be glad you did.

Pretense is evil. I see right through it.

You may fool others but you don't fool Me.

I will destroy your front and expose your heart
if you deceive and mislead others.

So repent and tell the truth, to yourself and others.

Put your trust in Me.”

Types of Worship

	IDOL WORSHIP	VAIN WORSHIP	TRUE WORSHIP
<i>What I exalt and desire</i>	A person or thing.	I exalt myself and I desire human praise and approval	The one true, living God
<i>Why I exalt and desire it</i>	I think he/she/it will make me happy or feel good.	To feel good about myself.	I believe that God is good and that He loves me
<i>What is in my heart</i>	--Selfish desires --Arrogance --Impatience with God --Trust in human senses	--Fear and guilt --Pride --Disregard of God --Trust in human thoughts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Desire for God ◆ Humility ◆ Awe of God ◆ Trust in God
<i>Place of worship</i>	Anywhere	Where other people will see me doing it	In Spirit and in truth
<i>Time of worship</i>	Continually, until death or repentance	When other people are doing it or will see me doing it	Any time or all of the time, for all eternity
<i>What I feel during worship</i>	Love and desire for the idol; Lack of interest in God; Fleeting relief, euphoria and/or excitement	Hypocrisy, pretense; Self-righteousness; Smugness, pride	My soul is fulfilled; I am lifted up by the Spirit of God into joy, freedom, love, truth and peace
<i>Who I have fellowship with</i>	Those who worship the same (or similar) idol that I worship	Those who agree on the same traditions, rituals, ceremonies, rules, creeds	All true believers in God, both in heaven and on earth
<i>Eventual results of this type of worship</i>	Getting some of what I want but not being satisfied; Anxiety, depression, anger, disappointment; Violation of personal values & standards; Addiction; inability to enjoy; Loss of self	Condemnation; Loss of respect for God Loss of feeling and emotion; Confusion and conflict; apathy Burdensome duties Stagnation, resentment; Loss of passion and hope	Fulfilled desires Ability to fully enjoy the life that God has given; Passionate, pure love for God and people; Peace, joy, patience; Goodness, kindness, faithfulness, self-control
<i>God works through this to lead me. . .</i>	To the end of Self, where I may give up my vain pursuits and turn to God for mercy and help	To the end of legalism, hypocrisy and vanity, where I may turn to Christ for a personal relationship with Him.	Into the abundant life in Christ, that endures through all persecution and suffering on earth.
<i>How various worshipers treat me</i>	Vain worshipers condemn me as unsaved and evil; true worshipers love me	Idol worshipers judge me as hypocritical and evil; true worshipers love me	Vain worshipers judge, oppose and hate me; Idol worshipers ridicule scorn and reject me